

Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization



**Report of the NAFO Joint Commission–Scientific Council  
Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) Meeting**

13 April 2021  
via WebEx

NAFO  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada  
2021

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1.	Opening by the co-Chairs, Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation) .....	3
2.	Appointment of Rapporteur .....	3
3.	Adoption of the Agenda .....	3
4.	Review and finalization of the 2020 catch estimates .....	3
5.	Review of statistics and catch data comparison prepared by the Secretariat.....	3
6.	Continuation of discussion on the implementation of PR2 Recommendation #4, MRAG report .....	3
7.	Other Business .....	4
8.	Recommendations.....	4
9.	Date and time of next meeting.....	4
10.	Adjournment.....	4
	Annex 1. List of Participants .....	5
	Annex 2. Agenda.....	7
	Annex 3. Guidance on Best Practices: Catch Estimation Methodology Study.....	8

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### **1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation)**

The NAFO Joint Commission-Scientific Council Catch Estimation Strategy Advisory Group (CESAG) met via WebEx on 13 April 2021. The meeting was opened at 9:30 hours (Atlantic Daylight Time) by co-Chairs Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation). Representatives from NAFO Contracting Parties (Canada, European Union, Japan, Ukraine) were in attendance. The Scientific Council Chair was also in attendance (Annex 1).

### **2. Appointment of Rapporteur**

The NAFO Secretariat was appointed rapporteur for this meeting.

### **3. Adoption of the Agenda**

The provisional agenda as previously circulated was adopted (Annex 2).

### **4. Review and finalization of the 2020 catch estimates**

The Secretariat presented the catch estimates of all NAFO TAC-managed stocks and all other species for 2020 (COM-SC WP 21-05). This represents the core task that was assigned to the Secretariat --- applying the Catch Estimation Strategy in deriving the catch estimates.

One Contracting Party indicated that it would provide the remaining supplementary data (3L Shrimp, and Grenadier) to complete the estimates. Once received, the Secretariat would update the working paper accordingly and forward to the Scientific Council by 01 May for consideration in its fish stock assessment work (see agenda item 7).

A recommendation to this effect would be forwarded to the Commission (see agenda item 8).

### **5. Review of statistics and catch data comparison prepared by the Secretariat**

On the request of CESAG, three working papers were prepared and presented by the Secretariat:

- COM-SC CESAG-WP 21-02, on the comparison of catch data sources,
- COM -SC CESAG-WP 21-03, on the calculation of the availability of catch amounts on a division basis in port inspection, and
- COM-SC CESAG-WP 21-04, on the calculation of the percentage of catch (from CATs – Daily Catch Report) for species by weight that was inspected in port.

Upon review of these working papers, it was noted that the information contained in these working papers complements COM-SC WP 21-05 and helpful when calculating the catch estimates using the Catch Estimation Strategy.

### **6. Continuation of the discussion on the implementation of PR2 Recommendation #4, the MRAG report**

In accordance with the 2018 NAFO Performance Review Panel Recommendations #4 (NAFO COM Doc. 19-32), CESAG identified the elements in the 2019 report *Catch Estimates Methodology Study* completed by MRAG Americas that could be applied by CESAG towards the improvement of the catch estimation strategy. These

Report of CESAG,  
13 April 2021

elements pertain to best practices for 1) data submission, and 2) tow catch estimates in NAFO fisheries (COM-SC CESAG-WP 21-01 Revised, see Annex 3).

A recommendation to this effect would be forwarded to the Commission (See agenda item 8).

## **7. Other Business**

There was no other business discussed.

## **8. Recommendations**

**The CESAG recommends that:**

- 1) The Secretariat revise the 2020 catch estimates contained in COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-05 to include the remaining data and forward it (COM-SC CESAG-WP 20-05 Revised) to the Scientific Council by the 01 May deadline.**
- 2) The Commission request STACTIC review best practices outlined in COM-SC CESAG-WP 21-01 Revised to identify the possible application of these best practices to improve tow catch estimates in the NAFO Regulatory Area and consider the specific guidance on the International Observer Program as part of its planned review of the NAFO Observer Program scheduled for 2022.**

## **9. Date and time of next meeting**

The next meeting will be in April 2022 via WebEx. A doodle survey will be circulated to determine the date and time.

## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 hours (Atlantic Daylight Time)

**Annex 1. List of Participants****CESAG CO-CHAIRS**

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Report of CESAG,  
13 April 2021

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**Annex 2. Agenda**

1. Opening by the co-Chairs, Katherine Sosebee (USA) and Temur Tairov (Russian Federation)
2. Appointment of Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Agenda
4. Review and finalization of the 2020 catch estimates
5. Review of statistics and catch data comparison prepared by the Secretariat
6. Continuation of the discussion on the implementation of PR2 Recommendation #4, the MRAG report
7. Other Business
8. Recommendations
9. Date and time of next meeting
10. Adjournment

**Annex 3. Guidance on Best Practices: Catch Estimation Methodology Study****(COM-SC CESAG-WP 21-01 Revised)**

This table is a summation of Table 6 (page 58) *Guidance on Best Practices for tow catch estimation in NAFO fisheries* and Table 7 *Assessment of catch estimates resources needs* (page 63-64) of the *Catch Estimates Methodology Study, 2019*.

It reflects the discussion at the most recent CESAG meeting where it was suggested to attempt separate those practices that would be considered general in nature and those that would be considered more specific in nature. In our earlier discussion, it was also recognized that Contracting Parties would require more time to assess these best practices and engagement by other NAFO bodies (e.g. STACTIC) would be also be required.

The table also suggests revised timelines for possible implementation. However, it is important to note that while further discussion or analysis may take place, some best practices may ultimately prove to be impractical in a NAFO context. Estimates of potential cost associated with each best practice are excluded from this table but listed in Table 8 (page 65-66) of the report.

Further, given the varying complexity of each best practice, these timelines are notional and subject to change pending further discussion by STACTIC and possible integration with ongoing work. Most timelines have been extended to medium term as the suggested timeline included in the report as “could be implemented in <1 year with dedication” is likely unachievable.

It is also noted that in regards to identified best practices relating to the International Observer Program, in accordance with the *NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures, Chapter V – Observer Scheme, Article 30 – Observer Program 19) Implementation*, the observer program will be reviewed by STACTIC in 2022.

<b>Guidance on Best Practices for data submission</b>	
<b>Best Practice</b>	<b>Timeline<sup>1</sup></b>
<p>1. NAFO to receives complete observer reports and data directly and in a format that enables their routine and efficient use in compliance and scientific analyses, including data quality screening procedures. (<i>Catch Estimates Methodology Study, MRAG Americas p. 18</i>)</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> 4.1.1.3 Electronic Fishing logbook (haul by haul) Reports The submission of logbook data on a haul-by-haul basis became mandatory in 2015 (Article 28.8.b). The electronic fishing logbook information (haul by haul data) must be submitted to the Secretariat in the format prescribed in Annex II.N. for all hauls of the fishing trip (Article 288.c).</p>	<p>All data currently being submitted in Excel format.</p> <p><i>Complete</i></p>

<sup>1</sup> Given the varying complexity of each best practice, these timelines are notional and subject to change pending further discussion by STACTIC and possible integration with ongoing work.



The Secretariat has received haul by haul reports for all 131 trips that were completed in 2019. (NAFO/COM Doc. 20-17 (Revised), <i>Annual Fisheries and Compliance Review 2020 (Compliance Report for Fishing Year 2019)</i> )	
<b>Guidance on Best Practices for Tow Catch Estimates in NAFO Fisheries (Table 6, <i>Catch Estimates Methodology Study</i>)</b>	
<b>International Observer Program</b>	
Best Practice	Timeline
1. Observers deployed from a different flag state to the vessel, either through a central provider or through a bilateral agreement or MoU between designating and receiving CPs.	Long Term
2. Common Standards and program accreditation	Short Term
3. Regular verification of average box weights	Medium Term
4. Regular verification conversion factors	Medium Term
5. Regular verification of volume to mass ratio	Medium Term
6. Observers provided with independent means of communication  <u>Comment:</u> a) NAFO CEM Article 30. Duties of the flag state Contracting Party 8) <i>(e), ensure that observers are equipped with an independent two-way communication device at sea.</i>  b) Still pending full implementation by several CPs.	Short Term
7. Photos and Video	Long Term
8. Catch data verification <i>(Recommendation from STACTIC OPR-WP 18-11)</i>	Short Term
<b>Guidance for Vessels</b>	
1. Vessels submit documentation on how catches are estimated on-board	Short Term
2. Motion compensated flow scales	Long Term
3. Codend weigher	Long Term
4. Discard estimation	Medium Term
5. Remote electronic monitoring (REM)	Medium Term
6. Electronic Reporting Scheme (ERS)	Long Term